

Data Management Plan — General Outline

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Use this Outline for general guidance on preparing a data management plan (DMP). This outline does not correspond to any particular grant funder's DMP requirements; however, you may find it useful for general data management planning and if you are applying to a funding agency that requires a DMP but does not provide specific guidance on what your plan should contain.

Download the library's generic DMP template for use with this outline in .docx format at:
<http://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/dc-promo/17/>

The library encourages you to consider using *DMPTool* for developing your data management plans. *DMPTool* includes templates and examples for many funding agencies that require such plans. Learn more about DMPTool at <http://georgiasouthern.libguides.com/data/DMPTool>.

For consultation, review of draft plans, or support preparing data for deposit in *Digital Commons @ Georgia Southern*, *OpenICPSR*, or another data repository, please contact Jeff Mortimore, Discovery Services and Data Curation Librarian, at jmortimore@georgiasouthern.edu or 912-478-0102.

Data Management Plan Outline

The following outline describes elements for consideration when preparing a data management plan. Significant portions of this outline are adapted from the [Cornell University Research Data Management Services Group](#) under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](#). This outline is not specific to any particular funder, discipline, or type of data. Depending on the scope and scale of the proposed research project, not all elements may be required. Total length of the completed data management plan should be 2-3 pages.

I. General Description

Describe the data expected to be produced over the course of the research project:

- Provide a brief, non-technical description of the data the project will produce.
- If the proposed research involves obtaining data from other sources, provide a brief description of the data, including its content, source, and any particular conditions for obtaining and using the data. Describe plans for redistributing any derived data products, if applicable.
- Indicate which data you will share and at what stage (e.g., raw, processed, reduced, or analyzed).
- Describe why the data you will share will be of interest to a broader community and how your plan will maximize the potential for its reuse.

II. Collection of Data

Describe how the data will be managed during the active phase of the proposed research:

- Describe how data will be collected and processed, including any quality assurance or quality control procedures.
- Identify the formats of data files created over the course of the project, and the approximate volume of data (if known).
- Describe how data sets will be organized, how data will be distributed among files, file naming conventions, directory organization, and version management.
- Describe how data sets will be stored and backed up during the course of the project, describing hardware, storage environment, and local or external services to be used. Include the costs for these services in proposal budget, if applicable.
- If your research is subject to oversight by the Institutional Review Board, refer to applicable requirements and describe how your data management practices will ensure compliance.
- Identify who will have access to working data and how access will be managed. For sensitive data, describe any security measures or formal standards that will be used.
- Describe what metadata will be created during the period of active research, when it will be created, and who will create it.

III. Sharing of Data

Describe how the data will be made available to others (e.g., an institutional repository such as *Digital Commons @ Georgia Southern*, a disciplinary repository such as *OpenICPSR*, as supplementary material to a publication, other strategy):

- Describe the file formats to be used for the data that will be shared. Select file formats for sharing that maximize the potential for reuse and longevity, and describe the plans for conversion to those formats, if necessary.
- Describe a plan for creating metadata to describe the data. Indicate who will create the metadata, and when. Identify the standards that will be used. If no applicable standards exist, describe what supplementary documentation you will make available to make the data understandable and usable by others.
- Describe conditions for reuse of the data by others. Describe any standard licenses (e.g., Creative Commons) that will be applied to data, or other terms of use.
- Describe how users will discover the data (e.g., a specific repository, references in publications, project website, Internet search engines, other means).
- Describe how users will access the data (e.g., direct download, registration and download, VPN, upon request).
- If acquiring data from another source, describe whether the data or derived versions of the data will be shared, and under what conditions.
- If data will not be made immediately available (e.g., embargoed), indicate when data will be shared.
- Indicate who will have primary responsibility for the data and who owns the data.

- Describe how your data sharing strategy will maximize the value of the data to the audience(s) of interest (e.g., a particular research community, the general public).

IV. Preservation of Data

Describe how the data will be preserved:

- Explain the criteria that will be used for selecting data for preservation.
- Identify any departmental, institutional, or programmatic policies on data retention, how they influence your plan, and how you will adhere to the policies.
- Specify how long data will be preserved. Some data may only be retained for the lifetime of the project, some may be retained for the project plus a specified number of years, and some may be worth the effort of long-term preservation (several years to decades). Consider what data are needed to validate the research, what data directly support publications based on the research, and what data have the greatest potential for reuse by others.
- Describe the expected longevity of the file formats and metadata standards or other documentation used for preservation relative to the expected preservation period.
- Describe the mechanisms by which the data will be preserved throughout the preservation period (e.g., an institutional repository such as *Digital Commons @ Georgia Southern*, a disciplinary repository such as *OpenICPSR*, as supplementary material to a publication, other strategy).
- Describe plans for transfer of responsibility, should the need arise. These plans should be agreed upon in consultation with access and preservation service providers.
- Include costs for any of these activities or services in your budget, if applicable.

V. Protection of Subjects and Intellectual Property

Describe additional considerations for managing the data, including security of the data, protection of privacy of subjects, and any departmental, institutional, or programmatic policies related to intellectual property, how they influence your plan, and how you will adhere to these policies.

- Describe how the data itself will be managed to protect privacy (e.g. measures taken to anonymize data, disposition of data including personally identifiable information).
- Describe how the data will be stored, if secure storage and/or restricted access are required.
- Some funding agencies (including the NSF) recognize that legal and ethical requirements may preclude sharing of some kinds of data. If this is the case, explain the circumstances that prevent you from sharing data.
- Some funding agencies (including the NSF) recognize that commercialization potential may delay or preclude data sharing, and exempts trade secrets and commercial information from the data sharing requirement. If this is the case, explain the circumstances that prevent you from sharing data.